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ABSTRACT

The Learning Partners Program (LPP) of the Westview Schools in North York (Ontario) was evaluated. The language arts program paired primary school students from grades 1 to 3 with junior school students three years older. The junior school students received preparation from their homeroom teachers. The evaluation examined the degree of program implementation and accomplishment of goals; identified attitudes of teachers, principals, and students about LPP; and examined the effect of the program on the rest of the curriculum. Questionnaires were administered to all teachers and principals in 12 participating schools. A sample of 272 students were administered questionnaires, and 7 sixth-grade students were interviewed. Results indicated that primary teachers used LPP once or twice per week, and most junior teachers used it four to five times per week. Most teachers made modifications in LPP. Procedures for matching the students were reported to be satisfactory for the teachers, as were their relationships with the teaching partner. Most teachers reported either no effect or a moderate effect on the total language arts program. Observation was valuable and cross-age interaction was the best liked component of LPP. Students generally liked their learning partners. A summary of questionnaire responses is included. (GDC)

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NORTH YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH REPORT

ED277712

REVIEW OF THE

LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Elaine Minsky

June, 1986

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REVIEW COMMITTEE

LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Learning Partners, now in its fourth year of operation in the Westview Family of Schools, is a Grade 1 to Grade 6 developmental learning program which implements the underlying philosophy of the Ministry document, "The Formative Years". Through carefully developed learning experiences, children are encouraged to learn about the learning process itself and specifically learn more about themselves as learners. Language tasks are the curriculum vehicle of the Learning Partners program, and all learning strategies used reflect the basic principles of the North York writing guideline, "Language Across the Curriculum".

Learning Partners features learning partnerships between primary and junior students: grade four students are partnered with grade one students, grade fives with twos and sixes with threes. The partnering of each primary teacher with a junior teacher is an important feature of the program. Since teacher observation of the children is a major component, the teacher partnerships provide an opportunity to share observations, perceptions, and ideas. Although Learning Partners includes all primary and junior students, the program primarily focuses on the junior student and the junior teacher. For junior students, Learning Partners is a daily 30 minute program while primary children participate only on partnering days, averaging two days per week.

To develop the skills required by the older junior student in the partnership, they are given a preparatory program by their home room teachers. The three phases of the program, Instructional, Planning and Consolidation, coincide with the three terms of the year. The Instructional Phase is designed to develop awareness within the older partners of the developmental level of their younger partners and introduces the specific skills required to teach units of work which reflect accepted practices of a primary language program. These include Reading To, Games, Storytelling and Reading With. In the Planning Phase, the older students make use of their newly acquired skills and learn to plan longer units of work for their partners using the language practices of the Instructional Phase. The Consolidation Phase integrates the Planning and Instructional skills the students have learned. The teacher partners are required to work closely in this final phase. They suggest themes of study from either the regular primary or junior classroom curriculum. The two teachers also decide with the older learning partners the number of planning and instructional days that will be appropriate. The learning partners themselves plan and develop their learning experiences. Through this phase the primary child is encouraged to demonstrate initiative by choosing books and materials and suggesting activities.

Since 1982 the Learning Partners Program has been a mandatory part of the Language Arts program in the Westview Family of Schools. In addition to the Westview schools, several other schools have decided to adopt the program.

II PURPOSE OF STUDY

In accordance with the North York Board's "White Paper on Policies and Procedures for Curriculum Management", a review of the Learning Partners Program was initiated by the Assistant Superintendent of that Family of Schools. In addition to the eight Westview Family schools who use Learning Partners, four schools from other families who had opted to use Learning Partners requested to be part of the review.

The mandate of the Review Committee was as follows:

1) That the review be completed for the Assistant Superintendent of the Westview Family by June 30, 1986

2) That the review focus on the elementary schools of the Westview Family and include other selected schools outside the family

3) That the review include recommendations

A Steering Committee determined the make-up of the Review Committee and set the following objectives:

1) To examine aspects of the intended, implemented and attained "Learning Partners" curriculum.

2) To identify attitudes and concerns of administrators, staff and students.

3) To examine the effect on the rest of the school's curriculum.

The Review Committee responsible for carrying out the review consisted of the following members:

Ellen Anderson	Coordinator of English
Carole Benson	Convener, Driftwood P.S.
Pat Crawford	Research Department
Ellen Fowler	Teacher, Yorkwoods P.S.
Brian Hodge	Principal, Gulfstream P.S.
Barrie Humphreys	Coordinator of Intermediate and Senior Education (Resource person to committee)
Sandra Kendall	Program Leader, Westview Family, Lamberton Centre
Elaine Minsky	Research Department
Barb Weidner	Assistant Superintendent's Office, Westview Family
John Welch	Principal, Blacksmith P.S. (Chairperson)

III METHOD

The Review Committee, meeting on a weekly basis, identified and concentrated on the following four areas as necessary components of the review process:

1. becoming familiar with the L.P.P. (Learning Partners Program) through discussions with external resource people, committee members and school observation.

2. developing and prioritizing specific review objectives.

3. developing questionnaires based on the objectives for teachers, principals and students in both the Westview family and the four schools who had opted to use the L.P.P. Further, to broaden committee members' understanding of the L.P.P. criteria were established for field observation.

4. collection of data, tabulating results and report writing.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE REVIEW

A. TO EXAMINE ASPECTS OF THE INTENDED, IMPLEMENTED AND ATTAINED "LEARNING PARTNERS" CURRICULUM.

. To determine the extent to which the L.P.P. is being implemented as intended:

- adherence to mandatory nature of program
- regularity of sessions
- extent to which teachers and/or school modify program (and reasons for)
- compatability of teaching partners

. To examine how successfully the L.P.P. accomplishes its stated goals (vis-a-vis oral language skills, reading, etc).

. To determine the extent to which principals and teachers understand and agree with the philosophy of the L.P.P.

B. TO IDENTIFY ATTITUDES OF ADMINISTRATORS, STAFF AND STUDENTS.

. To identify the attitudes of teachers, principals, conveners about the L.P.P. including

- perceived importance of L.P.P. (support for program)
- effect on school and/or community in regard to morale, friendships, teacher relationships with each other and with the wider student body
- communication with parents by administrators, staff and students
- availability and quality of resources and P.D. for teachers

- To determine the effect of the program on junior level students in terms of:

  - their understanding and empathy with younger children
  - their enjoyment of the program
  - understanding of their/others learning process
  - student perception of success

C. TO EXAMINE THE EFFECT ON THE REST OF THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM.

- To determine whether there is a transfer of strategies to different areas by teachers, students and principal.

- Transfer of content into L.P.P. from other curriculum areas.

Questionnaire Design

Using the set of objectives developed by committee members as a reference point, as well as significant input from personnel involved in implementing the L.P.P., questions to be directed at teachers, principals, and students were formulated and then over the course of several weeks revised. A total of five questionnaires were developed for: principals, junior teachers, primary teachers, junior students and an interview schedule based on a questionnaire for primary students.

"Sample" Selection

Because this review focussed only on the Westview Family and on an additional four schools for whom L.P.P. was optional, all principals in the 12 schools and all primary and junior teachers involved in Learning Partners, were asked to complete a questionnaire.

Primary Teachers Westview	N = 44	Junior Teachers Westview	N = 46
Primary Teachers Optional	N = 14	Junior Teachers Optional	N = 14

Based on school size, the student questionnaires were administered to 3 - 5 primary students and 15 - 24 junior students from each school yielding a sample of 35 primary students and 155 junior students from the eight Westview Family schools and 16 primary and 66 junior students from the four optional program schools. All students were randomly selected from class lists by Research staff.

Additional data in the form of modified interviews were collected from seven grade 6 students, also randomly selected.

The following provides background information about teachers and principals in terms of grade taught, number of years teaching Learning Partners and level of the program used.

WHAT LEVEL OF LEARNING PARTNERS ARE YOU USING THIS YEAR?

Primary Teachers

Level	Westview (N = 44) #	Westview (N = 44) %	Optional (N = 14) #	Optional (N = 14) %
I	18	41	9	64
II	15	34	4	29
III	9	20	1	6
N/A	2	5	-	-

Junior Teachers

	Westview (N = 46) #	Westview (N = 46) %	Optional (N = 14) #	Optional (N = 14) %
I	13	28	4	43
II	19	41	4	29
III	14	30	4	29

WHAT GRADE(S) DO YOU TEACH?

Primary Teachers

Year(s)	Westview #	Westview %	Optional #	Optional %
S.K.	1	2	-	-
1	14	32	4	29
1/2	1	2	4	29
2	13	30	2	14
2/3	2	5	1	7
3	12	27	2	14
Primary Sp. Education	1	2	1	7

Junior Teachers

3/4	2	4	2	14
4	8	17	3	21
4 (Sp.Ed.)	1	2	-	-
4/5	8	17	1	7
5	11	24	3	21
5/6	6	13	2	14
6	8	17	3	21
L.D. Sp. Ed.	1	2	-	-
L.R.L.	1	2	-	-

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Primary Teachers

Year(s)	Westview #	Westview %	Optional #	Optional %
Less than one year	2	5	-	-
2	12	27	6	43
3	15	34	1	7
4	6	14	-	-

Junior Teachers

1	11	24	7	50
2	13	28	6	43
3	16	35	1	7
4	6	13	-	-

Principals

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN A PRINCIPAL IN A SCHOOL IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Year(s)	Westview (N = 8) #	Westview (N = 8) %	Optional (N = 4) #	Optional (N = 4) %
1	2	25	2	50
2	3	38	2	50
3	1	13	-	-
4	2	25	-	-

Collection of Data

A memo from the Assistant Superintendent of the Westview Family was sent to the principals and staff of the schools involved in the L.P.P. review informing them of the review. Principals were further advised by the chairperson of the committee of the method of Data Collection and were requested to submit possible dates and times when questionnaires could be administered. Because of time constraints and to facilitate data collection, each committee member visited a minimum of one school at a pre-arranged meeting time where the staff filled out the questionnaires and directly handed them back. The questionnaires were sent to Research where results were tabulated.

The student questionnaires were administered by a Research staff member who visited each school and randomly selected the students. Both junior and primary students had the questions read to them, the junior students grouped by grade and the primary students individually. The Researcher filled in the primary students' answers on the questionnaire.

For observation data, each committee member arranged a visit to the same school where s/he had administered the questionnaires and observed two classes - a preparation class and accompanying partnering session.

Data Analysis

Data were summarized through a manual tally of responses from which percentages were calculated. These are presented in tables in the "Results" chapter. For many questions, where more than one answer was possible, percentages total more than 100.

IV RESULTS

The results of the Learning Partners Program Review are organized around the three major objectives relating to the purpose of this study.

I To Examine Aspects of The Intended Implemented and Attained "Learning Partners" Curriculum.

To determine the extent to which the Learning Partners Program is being implemented as intended both primary and junior teachers and principals were asked a series of questions relating to the adherence to the mandatory nature of the program including: regularity of sessions; extent to which teachers and/or school modify the program; time and location, as well as compatability of teaching partners and learning partners; materials and resources. The results are presented in the following tables.

Principals in both the Westview Family and the other four participating schools were asked whether all primary and junior teachers participated in the Learning Partners Program and responses were as follows:

DO ALL OF YOUR PRIMARY AND JUNIOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATE IN THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

	W.* N = 8		O. N = 4	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	4	50	4	100
No	4	50	-	-

Reasons given for non-participating teachers included: negative attitude on part of teachers (two responses), uneven number of teachers (one response); special education class (one response); new teachers to school (one response).

THE PROGRAM: TIME AND LOCATION

TYPICALLY HOW MANY DAYS EACH WEEK ARE YOUR STUDENTS INVOLVED IN THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Primary Teachers

Days per Week	W. N = 44		O. N = 14	
	#	%	#	%
Less than one	1	2	-	-
1	15	34	7	50
2	28	64	6	43
3+	-	-	1	7

* Legend: W = Westview
O = Optional

Junior Teachers

Days per Week	W. N = 46 #	%	O. N = 14 #	%
1	5	11	1	7
2	11	24	3	21
3	5	11	-	-
4	6	13	4	29
5	18	39	-	-
No answer	1	2	-	-

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SCHEDULE FOR EACH SESSION?

Primary Teachers

Time/Minutes	W. N = 44 #	%	O. N = 14 #	%
Less than 25 minutes	3	7	-	-
25 minutes	6	14	1	7
30 minutes	28	64	12	86
35 minutes	5	11	1	7
More than 35 minutes	2	5	-	-

Junior Teachers

Time/Minutes	W. N = 46 #	%	O. N = 14 #	%
Less than 25 minutes	-	-	-	-
25 minutes	6	13	1	7
30 minutes	31	67	10	71
35 minutes	3	7	3	21
More than 35 minutes	5	11	-	-
No answer	1	2	-	-

Principals

Response	W. N = 8 #	%	O. N = 4 #	%
30 - 40 minutes	7	88	4	100
No answer	1	13	-	-

When asked to comment on whether or not this amount of time was suitable, all of the Westview principals found the amount of time to be "about right". While three of the optional school principals agreed with this statement, one principal found the time to be "too little".

IS THE AMOUNT OF TIME:

Primary Teachers	W. #	W. N = 44 %	O. #	O. N = 14 %
Too much	2	5	1	7
About right	37	84	12	86
Too little	3	7	-	-
No answer	2	5	1	7

Junior Teachers	W. #	W. N = 46 %	O. #	O. N = 14 %
Too much	6	13	2	14
About right	27	59	10	71
Too little	11	24	2	14
No answer	2	4	-	-

Teachers were also asked if they usually scheduled the Learning Partner's Program at the same time of day and 93% (100% optional) of the junior teachers and 98% (100% optional) of the primary teachers responded affirmatively. This was largely done because of timetabling convenience. The Learning Partner's Program was not scheduled at all at various times by 87% (86% optional) of the junior teachers and 68% (71% optional) of the primary teachers for a variety of reasons. These included: school trips, other special activities, before holidays, conflicting activities, teacher absences, break between units, etc.

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU USUALLY SPEND PER LEARNING PARTNER SESSION:

Primary Teachers	Westview N = 44 Preparing W. %	Westview N = 44 Preparing O. %	Optional N = 14 On Follow-up Activities W. %	Optional N = 14 On Follow-up Activities O. %
0 to minimum of time	55	36	20	36
15 minutes or less	25	36	48	36
30 minutes	2	7	14	-
More than 30 minutes	2	-	2	14
No answer	16	21	16	14

Westview N = 46 Optional N = 14

Junior Division	Preparing W. %	Preparing O. %	On Follow-up Activities W. %	On Follow-up Activities O. %
Less than 15 minutes	4	21	11	21
15 to 29 minutes	20	21	15	43
30 to 59 minutes	33	50	22	21
60 minutes or more	7	7	4	7
Varies	7	-	15	-
Very little	-	-	2	7
Other	2	-	-	-
No answer	28	-	30	-

IS THE AMOUNT OF TIME:

Junior Division	Preparing W. %	Preparing O. %	On Follow-up Activities W. %	On Follow-up Activities O. %
Too much	13	21	9	14
About right	57	71	43	57
Too little	11	7	20	29
No answer	20	-	28	-

The Learning Partner's Program took place in most cases in either the junior partner's classroom or the primary partner's classroom, although in a very few cases, it was located in the hall or the resource centre. Eighty-nine percent (86% optional) of the junior teachers and 95% (93% optional) of the primary teachers found the location satisfactory.

When junior teachers were asked whether they had a Learning Partner's Centre in their classroom as suggested in the Learning Partners Program manual, 48% (57% optional) responded that they did and used it mainly for storage of Learning Partners Program material and in a few cases, as a display area. Primary teachers, for the most part, did not display Learning Partner's materials in their classroom because most of the 'products' were taken home by the children and other materials were displayed in the junior partner's classroom.

WHAT METHOD WAS USED FOR MATCHING TEACHERS FOR THE LEARNING PARTNER'S PROGRAM?

	W. Primary N = 44 %	W. Junior N = 46 %	O. Primary N = 14 %	O. Junior N = 14 %
By grade	45	28	57	50
Assigned by principal	25	13	36	21
Classroom proximity	2	-	-	-
Requests/personalities, new teachers with old/volunteers	25	33	-	7
Pupils matched - not teachers according to: class size, student 'type', etc.	-	7	-	-
No answer/don't know	12	20	7	21

Seventy-seven percent (86% optional) of the primary teachers and 74% (86% optional) of the junior teachers thought that the matching procedure of teachers was satisfactory. Suggestions for improving the process included: classes should be matched rather than using grades as the criterion; principals and teachers together should make the decision; process should start in October when staffing is settled; teachers should share same philosophy to maximize success. Finally, when asked to describe the working relationship with their teaching partner, responses were as follows:

RATING OF WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNER

	W. Primary N = 44 %	W. Junior N = 46 %	O. Primary N = 14 %	O. Junior N = 14 %
Excellent	48	41	43	36
Good	39	41	43	50
Fair	9	7	-	14
Poor	2	4	7	-
No answer	2	7	7	-

WHAT METHOD WAS USED FOR MATCHING STUDENTS?

	W. Primary N = 44 %	W. Junior N = 46 %	O. Primary N = 14 %	O. Junior N = 14 %
Teachers discussed each student and matched accordingly	75	59	86	86
Method suggested in manual	-	11	14	7
Joint student and teacher choice	7	20	-	-
Different partners each week	2	2	-	-
Senior students chose partners	7	-	-	-
No answer/not there	10	10	-	7

Forty-eight percent (71% optional) of the primary teachers and 52% (64% optional) of the junior teachers made use of the "Matching Considerations Sheet" in the matching process and over 60% of all the teachers found whatever matching process they used to be satisfactory.

In general, the partnerships were thought to be very successful by 61% (79% optional) of the primary teachers and 63% (72% optional) of the junior teachers.

At least half of all the teachers stated that they changed partnerships at some point for reasons other than student mobility. The most frequently cited reasons were "personality clashes and behavioural problems" and "inability to establish a productive 'pairing'".

Suggestions for improving the process of matching students included: starting the partnering later in the year when teacher knows students better; involve the children in the process; making Learning Partners optional - not beneficial for all students; discussion and observation by both teachers before partnering; matching students by reading and writing skills; using comments from previous year's teacher.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS AS PART OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

	Westview N = 44		Optional N = 14					
	To a Great Extent		Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
Primary Teachers	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Primary checklist	5	7	20	29	64	50	11	14
Teacher observations	34	50	23	29	41	21	2	-
Teacher binders	18	36	27	36	50	29	5	-

Westview N = 46 Optional N = 14

Junior Teachers	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
Junior checklist	13	14	20	14	61	71	7	-
Teacher observations	37	14	30	50	28	36	4	-
Instructional pages for teachers	78	86	11	14	6	-	4	-
Worksheets and binders for students	70	57	20	43	7	-	4	-

Of the seven items listed, primary and junior teachers rated the instructional pages for teachers and the worksheets and binders for students as being those used to the greatest extent.

HOW USEFUL DO YOU FIND THE FOLLOWING SUPPORT MATERIALS?

Primary Teachers	Very Useful W. %	Very Useful O. %	Somewhat Useful W. %	Somewhat Useful O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
Games	70	71	18	14	7	-	5	14
Story books	73	64	14	14	9	7	5	14
Picture sets	70	71	11	7	14	7	5	14
Wordless books	64	71	16	14	14	-	7	14
Flip books	68	71	11	14	11	-	9	14
Silly sentence cards	59	64	16	21	18	-	7	14
Pattern books	64	64	14	7	16	-	7	29

Junior Teachers	Very Useful W. %	Very Useful O. %	Somewhat Useful W. %	Somewhat Useful O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
Games	67	100	20	-	9	-	4	-
Story books	70	93	15	-	11	7	4	-
Picture sets	65	100	29	-	9	-	7	-
Wordless books	65	93	15	7	11	-	9	-
Flip books	57	93	22	-	9	-	13	7
Silly sentence cards	57	71	15	-	17	21	11	7
Pattern books	54	36	15	-	11	-	20	14

As can be seen in the above primary and junior tables, teachers indicated that the materials provided were useful. However, the degree of usefulness as indicated by the non-Westview family junior teachers was significantly greater than the degree indicated by the Westview junior teachers.

Primary and junior teachers made a number of suggestions as to other materials and resources which would help in the delivery of the program. These included: more supplies for arts and crafts; more flexibility to use their own books and activities, as well as library books and filmstrips; more open-ended material with good introductions; extended use of the materials instead of using them only for one or two sessions; more challenging reading material; large picture drawing; more variety in activities and new and different materials for next year.

Teachers and Principals were asked to comment on the extent to which they modified the Learning Partners Program and the results are as follows:

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU MODIFIED THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Teachers	W. Primary N = 44 %	W. Junior N = 46 %	O. Primary N = 14 %	O. Junior N = 14 %
To a great extent	39	39	21	36
To a moderate extent	27	43	43	50
Not at all	18	13	29	14
No answer	16	4	7	-

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOUR TEACHERS MODIFIED THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Principals	W. N = 8 #	%	O. N = 4 #	%
To a great extent	2	**25**	1	**25**
To a moderate extent	4	**50**	1	**25**
Not at all	2	**25**	2	**50**

Forty-one percent (36% optional) of the junior teachers and 34% (21% optional) of the primary teachers reported that they omit sections of the Learning Partners Program. While the units and phases omitted varied greatly, the reasons for omitting the material are listed as follows in order of number of responses: time constraints; material inappropriate (either too difficult or too boring); supplies not available; activities repetitive.

Other ways in which the Learning Partners Program is modified are listed in the following table:

IF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM IS MODIFIED IN OTHER WAYS, PLEASE DESCRIBE

Primary Teachers	W. N = 44 #	%	O. N = 14 #	%
. Modified to better suit ability levels: time constraints; (eliminated sections, reduced time, chose other activities, used student ideas; 2 or 3 primary to one junior partner	15	**34**	4	**29**
. No answer	29	**66**	10	**71**

IF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM IS MODIFIED IN OTHER WAYS, PLEASE DESCRIBE

Junior Teachers	W. N = 46 #	%	O. N = 14 #	%
. Modifications to better suit varying ability levels (e.g. non-readers, special ed., etc.)	5	11	-	-
. Altered program due to time constraints, lack of materials, met with partner once a week, follow-up activities changed, etc.	6	13	6	43
. Children chose own activities	3	7	1	7
. Integrated partnerships into other thematic activities	2	4	-	-
. Made program a small group activity (not all children involved, for those who "would benefit")	2	4	-	-
. No answer	29	63	7	50

Principals listed a number of modifications made but all related to changes in time allotted and to content.

WHAT DIFFICULTIES ARISE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING PARTNERS?

Principals

The twelve principals at both the Westview Family and Optional schools responded to the question of difficulties which arise in the implementation of Learning Partners with responses that fell into three categories:

1) Teacher related difficulties, i.e. varying degrees of committment among staff; teacher relationships with other staff; problems in matching teachers; negative attitude of some teachers; teacher perception that other areas of the curriculum are being neglected; staff new to the concept.

2) Student related problems, i.e. discipline; problems in matching partners; split-grade groupings; pupil transience.

3) Time and resource difficulties, i.e. time constraints; cuts down flexibility in time-tabling; allocated time frame and lack of materials.

In examining how successfully the Learning Partner's Program accomplishes its stated goals vis-a-vis oral language skills, reading, etc., teachers and principals were asked to rate five goals of the Learning Partners Program on a 1 - 5 scale. The results are as follows:

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW SUCCESSFUL IS THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM IN TERMS OF ACHIEVING ITS GOALS?

	Westview N = 44				Optional N = 14	
	Very Successful		Somewhat Successful		Not at all Successful	
Primary Teachers	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
. to share regular working time with a junior grade pupil throughout the year	64	79	7	14	25	-
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing through active learning and concrete experiences	34	29	20	43	41	21
. to learn important social skills by talking, working and sharing with an older child	55	71	18	21	25	-
. to practice and extend skills acquired in or directly related to the primary classroom program	36	21	14	43	45	29
. to develop greater confidence and trust through their relationship with their learning partner	43	57	32	29	23	14
Junior Teachers						
. to help children develop an awareness of the stages of learning	30	43	30	29	39	29
. to teach children how to help younger children learn	50	71	26	29	24	-
. to teach children strategies and techniques which will enhance the likelihood of attaining success	41	50	28	36	30	14

Westview N = 46 Optional N = 14

Junior Teachers	Very Successful W. %	Very Successful O. %	Somewhat Successful W. %	Somewhat Successful O. %	Not at all Successful W. %	Not at all Successful O. %
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing	46	43	22	50	33	7
. to help children to develop their planning, organization and time management skills	43	64	24	21	33	14

Westview N = 8 Optional N = 4

Principals	Very Successful W. %	Very Successful O. %	Somewhat Successful W. %	Somewhat Successful O. %	Not at all Successful W. %	Not at all Successful O. %
. to share regular working time with a junior grade pupil throughout the year	75	75	13	25	13	-
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing through active learning and concrete experiences	50	75	38	25	13	-
. to learn important social skills by talking, working and sharing with an older child	63	75	25	25	13	-
. to practice and extend skills acquired in or directly related to the primary classroom program	38	50	63	25	-	25
. to develop greater confidence and trust through their relationship with their learning partner	63	100	38	-	-	-

As can be seen in the tables above, when asked to rank the five identified goals of the Learning Partners Program, a higher percentage of primary and junior teachers and principals believe that the L.P.P. significantly assists children in acquiring important social skills. However, all three groups lack the conviction that the Learning Partners Program contributes significantly to the improvement of the students' communication skills.

Finally, to determine the extent to which principals and teachers understand and agree with the philosophy of the Learning Partners Program, they were asked to comment on a number of the stated goals of the Learning Partners Program as well as offer what they considered to be the essential philosophical elements of the Learning Partners Program.

IN YOUR OPINION WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL PHILOSOPHICAL ELEMENTS OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

Teachers	W. Primary N = 44 %	W. Junior N = 46 %	O. Primary N = 14 %	O. Junior N = 14 %
• Encourages positive relationship between older and younger children with benefits to both (responsibility, caring, sharing	68	57	36	100
• Incorporates all elements of a good junior program (reading, writing, speaking, story telling, planning and organizational skills	-	20	64	21
• Encourages active learning (planning, preparation and follow-up- learn by teaching	5	20	21	-
• Benefits to relationship between teachers and also teachers and students	5	11	7	14
No answer	23	22	-	14

When principals from both the Westview Family and Optional Schools were asked what they considered to be the essential philosophical elements of the Learning Partners Program, their responses included the following: a cooperative multi-age group for learning and planning emphasizing pupil and staff cooperation and pupil responsibility (four responses), a development of understanding of self as a learner - an active shared learning (three responses); a sequenced language based program integral to the language arts program featuring a predictable time frame and creative thinking skills (five responses).

Clearly however, in examining the responses of teachers and principals, the most significant response in regards to the essential elements of the Learning Partners Program is the encouragement of positive social relationships.

Thirteen educational objectives (from P.P.J.D.) were listed and teachers and principals were asked to rate the extent to which the Learning Partners Program meets these objectives. Teachers and principals were also asked to comment on the appropriateness of five identified goals of the Learning Partners Program. The results are as follows.

IN YOUR OPINION, TO WHAT EXTENT DOES LEARNING PARTNERS:

Primary Teachers	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
• encourage speakers of non-standard English to express ideas freely	43	57	30	14	25	29	2	-
• provide opportunities for children to listen to the teacher read prose and poetry for a variety of purposes	11	14	7	36	68	36	14	14
• allow children to monitor their own speech as well as that of others	16	36	36	29	39	36	9	-
• provide opportunities to use speech in prepared and impromptu situations from pre-selected and self-selected topics	32	57	30	14	27	29	11	-
• build an expectation in each child of being able to read the materials provided rather than a feeling of dependence on the teacher	48	36	23	43	20	21	9	-
• provide a range of materials at varying degrees of difficulty on specific topics being studied	32	43	30	29	32	29	7	-
• provide opportunities for the teacher to observe, make appropriate program modifications and systematically keep track of the progress of every child	34	29	20	21	36	43	9	7
• include activities that provide a genuine purpose and audience for writing	34	50	27	21	34	29	5	-
• stress process rather than product	59	57	25	29	14	14	2	-

Primary Teachers	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
. develop an understanding of such communication skills as point of view, focus, selection of detail, sequence, association of ideas, and inference	25	43	30	29	41	29	5	-
. offer carefully planned sequences of activities and provide students with a clear framework in which to work	43	57	25	21	20	21	11	-
. relate to various areas of the curriculum and involve all language skills	39	43	25	36	27	21	9	-
. provide opportunities for developing social and personal skills	64	79	16	14	18	7	2	-

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW APPROPRIATE ARE THE FOLLOWING GOALS OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY DIVISION STUDENTS?

Primary Teachers	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
. to share regular working time with a junior grade pupil throughout the year	64	79	23	14	11	-	2	7
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing through active learning and concrete experiences	59	50	20	21	18	21	2	7
. to learn important social skills by talking, working and sharing with an older child	73	79	11	14	14	-	2	7

Primary Teachers	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
. to practice and extend skills acquired in or directly related to the primary classroom program	61	43	20	36	16	14	2	7
. to develop greater confidence and trust through their relationship with their learning partner	64	71	23	21	11	-	2	7

IN YOUR OPINION, TO WHAT EXTENT DOES LEARNING PARTNERS:

Junior Teachers	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
. encourage speakers of non-standard English to express ideas freely	22	42	39	36	35	21	4	-
. provide opportunities for children to listen to the teacher read prose and poetry for a variety of purposes	27	36	50	29	20	36	4	-
. allow children to monitor their own speech as well as that of others	22	29	26	50	46	21	7	-
. provide opportunities to use speech in prepared and impromptu situations from pre-selected and self-selected topics	48	50	26	29	20	14	4	7
. build an expectation in each child of being able to read the materials provided rather than a feeling of dependence on the teacher	46	79	24	7	24	14	7	-
. provide a range of materials at varying degrees of difficulty on specific topics being studied	24	29	30	36	41	29	4	7

	To a Great Extent		Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
. provide opportunities for the teacher to observe, make appropriate program modifications and systematically keep track of the progress of every child	22	36	33	29	41	36	4	-
. include activities that provide a genuine purpose and audience for writing	28	42	33	50	33	7	7	-
. stress process rather than product	72	79	13	14	11	7	4	-
. develop an understanding of such communication skills as point of view, focus, selection of detail, sequence, association of ideas, and inference	22	50	39	21	33	29	7	-
. offer carefully planned sequences of activities and provide students with a clear framework in which to work	46	71	28	29	22	-	4	-
. relate to various areas of the curriculum and involve all language skills	37	42	20	29	37	29	7	-
. provide opportunities for developing social and personal skills	63	86	17	14	15	-	4	-

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW APPROPRIATE ARE THE FOLLOWING GOALS OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM FOR JUNIOR DIVISION STUDENTS?

Junior Teachers	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %	N/A W. %	N/A O. %
. to help children develop an awareness of the stages of learning	46	43	22	43	30	14	2	-
. to teach children how to help younger children learn	70	71	13	29	15	-	2	-
. to teach children strategies and techniques which will enhance the likelihood of attaining success	57	71	26	29	15	7	2	-
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing	59	64	26	29	13	7	2	-
. to help children to develop their planning, organization and time management skills	59	64	17	21	22	14	2	-

IN YOUR OPINION, TO WHAT EXTENT DOES LEARNING PARTNERS:

Westview N = 8 Optional N = 4

Principals	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %
. encourage speakers of non-standard English to express ideas freely	50	100	38	-	13	-
. provide opportunities for children to listen to the teacher read prose and poetry for a variety of purposes	13	75	50	25	38	-
. allow children to monitor their own speech as well as that of others	25	50	63	50	13	-

Principals	To a Great Extent W. %	To a Great Extent O. %	Moderate Extent W. %	Moderate Extent O. %	Not at all W. %	Not at all O. %
. provide opportunities to use speech in prepared and impromptu situations from pre-selected and self-selected topics	75	75	25	25	-	-
. build an expectation in each child of being able to read the materials provided rather than a feeling of dependence on the teacher	50	75	50	25	-	-
. provide a range of materials at varying degrees of difficulty on specific topics being studied	50	75	38	25	13	-
. provide opportunities for the teacher to observe, make appropriate program modifications and systematically keep track of the progress of every child	75	50	25	25	-	25
. include activities that provide a genuine purpose and audience for writing	87	100	13	-	-	-
. stress process rather than product	87	75	13	25	-	-
. develop an understanding of such communication skills as point of view, focus, selection of detail, sequence, association of ideas, and inference	25	50	25	50	50	-
. offer carefully planned sequences of activities and provide students with a clear framework in which to work	63	100	38	-	-	-
. relate to various areas of the curriculum and involve all language skills	38	25	63	50	-	25
. provide opportunities for developing social and personal skills	100	75	-	25	-	-

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW APPROPRIATE ARE THE FOLLOWING GOALS OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY DIVISION STUDENTS?

Westview N = 8 Optional N = 4

Principals	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not Appropriate W. %	Not Appropriate O. %
. to share regular working time with a junior grade pupil throughout the year	75	100	25	-	-	-
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing through active learning and concrete experiences	87	100	13	-	-	-
. to learn important social skills by talking, working and sharing with an older child	100	100	-	-	-	-
. to practice and extend skills acquired in or directly related to the primary classroom program	75	100	25	-	-	-
. to develop greater confidence and trust through their relationship with their learning partner	100	100	-	-	-	-

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW APPROPRIATE ARE THE FOLLOWING GOALS OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM FOR JUNIOR DIVISION STUDENTS?

Principals	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not Appropriate W. %	Not Appropriate O. %
. to help children develop an awareness of the stages of learning	38	100	13	-	50	-
. to teach children how to help younger children learn	87	100	13	-	-	-
. to teach children strategies and techniques which will enhance the likelihood of attaining success	87	100	13	-	-	-

Principals	Very Appropriate W. %	Very Appropriate O. %	Somewhat Appropriate W. %	Somewhat Appropriate O. %	Not Appropriate W. %	Not Appropriate O. %
. to improve students' communication skills in terms of speaking, reading, listening, writing, viewing	87	100	13	-	-	-
. to help children to develop their planning, organization and time management skills	75	100	25	-	-	-

The responses to the rating of the thirteen educational objectives (from P.P.J.D.), particularly those of teachers, indicated that in the teacher's perception the Learning Partners Program does not contribute significantly to many of these objectives. However, the ones relating to social and personal skill development and "process" rather than "product" were more highly rated. Eleven of the twelve principals also agreed that the Learning Partners Program included activities with a genuine purpose and audience for writing.

When teachers and principals were asked to comment on the appropriateness of five identified goals of the Learning Partners Program, the highest ranking was accorded the goal pertaining to the acquisition of social skills. Principals tended to rate all the goals for primary and junior students highly except for the "junior student" goal pertaining to the development of an awareness of the stages of learning.

II TO IDENTIFY ATTITUDES OF ADMINISTRATORS, STAFF AND STUDENTS

Questions relating to the perceived importance of the Learning Partners Program; the effect of the program on school and/or the community (especially in regard to morale, friendships, teacher and student relations); communication with parents; availability and quality of resources and professional development; were all specific or implied components of this second objective. Information gathered from the student sample is included separately in Appendix A.

To determine the attitude of teachers and principals in regard to the role of the Learning Partner's Program in the Language Arts Curriculum, the following question was asked, with accompanying results:

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR TOTAL LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM?

Teachers	W. Primary N=44 #	%	W. Junior N=46 #	%	O. Primary N=14 #	%	O. Junior N=14 #	%
To a great extent	3	7	5	11	1	7	2	14
To a moderate extent	16	36	18	39	6	43	7	50
Not at all	22	50	17	37	7	50	5	36
No answer	3	7	6	13	-	-	-	-

As can be seen in the table above, the majority of teachers indicated that the Learning Partners Program had either no effect on their total Language Arts Program or contributed only to a moderate extent. Teachers were further asked to elaborate on the relationship of both programs and their comments are as follows:

Primary Teachers Please Elaborate:	W. #	%	O. #	%
. Integrated into my Language Arts program by presenting new ideas, creative writing, listening skills, etc.	15	34	3	21
. Opportunity to develop oral conversation and develop sight vocabulary as well as socialization	5	11	5	36
. We do not meet often enough for it to contribute	2	5	2	14
. Academically a separate program	6	14	-	-
. Takes too much time away from other valuable Language Arts ideas	3	7	1	7
. No answer	13	30	3	21

Junior Teachers Please Elaborate:

	W. #	W. %	O. #	O. %
• Program excellent for providing meaningful oral and written exercises and variety of activities related to reading	13	28	3	21
• Program is an isolated part of my Language Arts program - does not relate to other activities.	10	22	4	29
• Program requires too much time particularly for slower students and students with poor language skills	3	7	-	-
• Junior students find it boring to write about their partners	2	4	-	-
• Reading and oral language development of shy and reluctant readers enhanced	2	4	3	21
• Program is too restrictive	1	2	-	-
• No answer	15	33	4	29

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM CONTRIBUTE TO THE TOTAL LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Principals	W. N=8 #	W. N=8 %	O. N=4 #	O. N=4 %
To a great extent	2	25	1	25
To a moderate extent	5	63	3	75
Not at all	1	13	-	-

In elaborating on their responses, four of the principals stated that the Learning Partners Program plays an important role in the Language Arts Program only where <u>both</u> teachers work hard at contributing to the program. Three principals felt that the program was an essential component of a successful Language Arts curriculum, particularly in view of the significant time involvement of junior grade students, and two principals were of the opinion that the Learning Partners Program was only one component and took the place of other elements of Language Arts.

HOW VALUABLE IS THE OBSERVATION TIME BUILT INTO THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

	W. Primary (N = 44) #	%	W. Junior (N = 46) #	%	O. Primary (N = 14) #	%	O. Junior (N = 14) #	%
Very valuable	19	43	10	22	6	43	5	35
Moderately valuable	17	39	17	37	2	14	4	29
Not at all valuable	7	16	10	22	6	43	4	29
No answer	1	2	9	20	-	-	1	7

Primary Teachers Please Elaborate:	W. #	%	O. #	%
. Enhances understanding of individual students (their needs, interpersonal skills, concentration, etc.)	20	45	8	57
. I do not have the time (too many problems, i.e. absentees; materials; difficult to observe in separate areas)	5	11	2	14
. Would have been more valuable if primary teachers had more input	-	-	2	14
. No answer	19	43	3	21

Junior Teachers Please Elaborate:	#	%	#	%
. Enhances understanding of individual students (their needs, interpersonal skills, concentration, etc.)	9	20	4	29
. I do not have time (too many problems, i.e. absentees; materials; difficult to observe in separate areas)	7	15	2	14
. Observation is a continuing process not just a feature of the Learning Partners Program	5	11	3	21
. No answer	25	54	5	36

The next three questions directed at principals and teachers are essentially offshoots of each other: what is liked most and least about the Learning Partners Program, followed by suggested changes to the Program.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

	W. Primary (N = 44) #	%	W. Junior (N = 46) #	%	O. Primary (N = 14) #	%	O. Junior (N = 14) #	%
• Interaction between two age groups (helping, sharing, sense of achievement)	21	48	20	43	9	64	13	93
• Variety of materials/stimulating and interesting	1	2	7	15	-	-	1	7
• Provides opportunity for junior students to accept sense of responsibility, independence/improve skills, learn about herself/himself	3	7	6	13	-	-	1	7
Primary Teachers only								
• Opportunities to work with other teachers; time to observe, etc.	7	16			2	14		
• Teacher gets to know a broader range of students	1	2			-	-		
• Helped in area of oral language for ESL/Primary kids enjoyment and enthusiasm	-	-			2	14		
• No answer	10	23			-	-		
Junior Teachers only			#	%				
• Brief respite from normal teaching activities and contact with a colleague/time to observe			4	9			-	-
• Teacher meeting and becoming familiar with younger students			3	7			-	-
• Nothing			2	4			-	-
• No answer			6	13			-	-

It is evident from the preceding table that both primary and junior teachers agreed that the interaction between the two age groups was the component of the Learning Partners Program which they liked most.

When principals from both the Westview and the Optional schools were asked what they liked most about the Learning Partners Program, their answers were as follows:

- The aspect of social interaction for both students and teachers (i.e. older students as role models; the working relationship between teachers, etc.)
- The stress on organizing skills and the balance of structure and creativity in the program
- The excellent strategies for language learning and the materials;
- The philosophical ideas involved and the benefits to both the manifest curriculum as well as the latent curriculum.

Principals and teachers were also asked what they liked least about the Learning Partners Program. The results are included in separate tables for the primary division, Westview Family and the optional schools, as the responses differed slightly in terms of emphasis.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Westview - Primary Teachers N = 44	#	%
. Too structured (time constraints; viewed negatively because it's compulsory; against philosophy of individualized learning)	10	23
. Program materials and activities unsuitable (boring, too much written work, not enough writing, too many games, insufficient art supplies)	6	14
. Not suitable for all children (misbehaving; immaturity; poor skill level, etc.)	5	11
. Inadequacies of junior teacher (lack of organization, negative attitude, done inconsistently)	3	7
. Miscellaneous (too many children in one place, absent partners; inequality of work load for junior and primary teachers and kids, everything)	4	9
. No answer	21	48

Optional - Primary Teachers N = 14	#	%
. Time (not enough; junior students resent amount of time required; cuts into regular program time)	3	21
. Related difficulties (negative attitude on part of junior student; younger partner not involved)	3	21
. Inappropriate materials (i.e. too hard, requires too much supervision)	3	21
. Miscellaneous (i.e. doesn't meet academic goals; don't like rigid structure; I like everything)	4	29
. No answer	7	50

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Junior Teachers	W. (N = 46) #	W. (N = 46) %	O. (N = 14) #	O. (N = 14) %
. Too time consuming (infringes on regular class time; preparation and writing too demanding, not enough time to complete follow-up activities)	24	52	13	93
. The fact that it is not optional (not all children benefit)	10	22	-	-
. Most of preparation, delivery and evaluation falls on junior teacher and student	1	2	2	14
. Inequitable matching of students due to uneven classes/ absentees	3	7	-	-
. Repetition of materials and ideas	2	4	-	-
. Miscellaneous (requires a lot of storage space; require more materials for phases 2 and 3; silly sentences not sentences)	-	-	3	21
. Satisfied with program	2	4	1	7
. No answer	4	9	1	7

Principals responses from both the Westview Family and optional schools are included together in the following table.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Principals	W. (N = 8) #	O. (N = 4) #
. Organization time	3	-
. Dealing with teachers not supportive of program	2	-
. Would like more time	1	-
. Amount of time it takes	1	-
. "Tightness" of delivery of package	-	1
. Difficulties in implementation due to uneven grade groupings	-	1
. Nothing	-	3
. No Answer	2	-

WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU SUGGEST IN THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Westview - Primary Teachers N = 44	#	%
. Program requires revision and editing (i.e. fewer units, more choice of activities, more student input; should be optional; more flexible, etc.)	14	32
. Not all children should participate (selected children; 1 to 1 ratio; grade 4's too young to be a junior partner)	6	14
. Eliminate it	3	7
. Miscellaneous - more money allotted and more partnering time	2	5
. No answer	21	48

Optional - Primary Teachers N = 14

	#	%
. More input from primary teachers and students	4	29
. Time constraints (i.e. program requires too much; want more)	3	21
. Miscellaneous - works well; although some children should not participate	2	14
. No answer	5	36

Junior Teachers	W. (N = 46) #	%	O. (N = 14) #	%
. More flexibility in terms of modifying materials, activities, etc. according to needs	7	15	8	57
. Cut back amount of time required	10	22	3	21
. Use Learning Partners only with those children who would benefit/make program optional	9	20	-	-
. More teacher input (primary and junior)	2	4	2	14
. More materials/supplies made available	3	7	-	-
. More integration with other subject areas	1	2	-	-
. Miscellaneous - (scrap the program; keep first unit and give suggestions for planning and partnering on a less formal basis)	4	9	-	-
. No answer	10	22	3	21

Principals

When principals were asked to suggest changes in the Learning Partners Program responses were varied except for these two suggestions: to make the program voluntary on the part of staff (three responses from Westview Family principals) and to have better methods of integrating the Learning Partners Program into the regular program (four responses from both groups). The remainder of the suggestions are listed as follows, with an asterisk (*) denoting a response from an optional school principal:

- two or three sessions per year with breaks in between
- prioritize the number and type of skills expected to be learned by the children

- clarification as to the role of the Learning Partners Program in the reading program
- less structure and more open-ended activities
- less time per week
- would like to involve Vanier Secondary School in preparing materials for Optional Family of Schools *
- School-based changes, i.e. focus more on preplanning and start-up dates *
- More professional development
- Some "tie-ins" to new ministry and board documents *

Finally, teachers and principals were asked whether they would choose to implement the Learning Partners Program if it were optional. The results follow:

IF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM WERE OPTIONAL, WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO IMPLEMENT IT IN YOUR SCHOOL?

	W. Primary (N = 44) #	%	W. Junior (N = 46) #	%	O. Primary (N = 14) #	%	O. Junior (N = 44) #	%
Yes	23	52	21	46	10	71	10	71
No	17	39	22	48	3	21	4	29
No answer	4	9	3	7	1	7	-	-

Principals	(N = 8) #	%	(N = 4) #	%
Yes	8	100	4	100
No	-	-	-	-

From the above table it can be seen that the Westview teachers are very closely divided as to whether or not they would choose to implement the Learning Partners Program. However seventy-one percent (71%) of the teachers in the "optionally" involved schools said that they would choose to implement it. In contrast, all principals in the sample, given the choice, would opt to implement the Learning Partners Program in their schools.

In an attempt to determine the effect of the Learning Partners Program on the school and/or community in regard to morale, friendships and teacher/student relationship, the following question was asked of teachers and principals:

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM:

Westview N = 44 Optional N = 14

	To a Great Extent		To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		Don't Know		N/A	
	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Primary Teachers										
. Contributes to enhanced morale among teachers in your school	16	21	16	36	59	21	2	21	7	-
. Enables you to become familiar with a broader group of children in the school	66	71	16	14	16	14	-	-	2	-
. Enables children to establish friendships with a broader group of children in the school	68	64	14	21	16	14	-	-	2	-
Junior Teachers										
. Contributes to enhanced morale among teachers in your school	9	7	20	57	50	29	20	7	2	-
. Enables you to become familiar with a broader group of children in the school	43	50	26	43	30	7	-	-	-	-
. Enables children to establish friendships with a broader group of children in the school	43	57	35	36	22	7	-	-	-	-

Westview N = 8 Optional N = 4

	To a Great Extent W. #	To a Great Extent O. #	To a Moderate Extent W. #	To a Moderate Extent O. #	Not at all W. #	Not at all O. #
Principals						
. Contributes to enhanced morale among teachers in your school	1	1	3	2	4	1
. Enables teachers to become familiar with a broader group of children in the school	5	4	2	-	1	-
. Enables children to establish friendships with a broader group of children in the school	5	4	2	-	1	-

From the tables above, it is evident that both primary and junior teachers, as well as their principals, felt that the Learning Partners Program contributed to a great extent to their students and their own familiarity with a large number of students in their schools. However the impact of the program on staff morale was rated by the Westview teachers as not contributing at all to staff morale while the teachers in the optionally involved schools rated the impact as being moderate. The principals' view of the impact on staff morale ranged from "not at all" to a moderate extent.

Results for the questions regarding communication with parents about the Learning Partners Program by teachers and principals are presented in the following tables.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS ABOUT THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Primary Teachers	Westview (N=44) #	Westview (N=44) %	Optional (N=14) #	Optional (N=14) %
. Parent interviews/report cards; curriculum night	25	**57**	12	**86**
. Through the children; displays; work sent home	3	**7**	1	**7**
. Miscellaneous (only if problems arise; socially; it is a waste of time, etc.)	4	**9**	-	-
. Not at all/not much	16	**36**	5	**36**
. No answer	7	**16**	-	-

Junior Teachers	Westview (N = 46) #	%	Optional (N = 14) #	%
. Parent interviews/report cards	21	**46**	13	**93**
. Bulletins	-	-	3	**21**
. Through the students	1	**2**	2	**14**
. Very little/as inquiries arise	7	**15**	-	-
. No answer	17	**37**	-	-

Principals N = 12	#
. Part of reporting procedure on oral basis and on report cards	6
. Newsletters	3
. Hall and photo display	1
. We don't	2

HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN TO PARENTS WHY YOU ARE OFFERING THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Primary Teachers

Eighty percent (Westview) and 79% (Optional) of the responses cited such advantages as helping children to develop social skills, cooperation, responsibility, language skills, confidence and trust - all goals of the Learning Partners Program. Negative responses included answers such as "compulsory - no choice" (20%) and "would prefer not to sell this program" (7%).

Junior Division teachers' responses were somewhat more varied and are as follows:

Junior Teachers	Westview (N=46) #	%	Optional (N=14) #	%
. Encourages cooperation, understanding, social behaviour and communication skills between primary and junior students	14	30	5	36
. Develops responsibility for planning and carrying out activities - helps child understand need for learning	7	15	7	50
. Compliments language arts; reading program	6	13	6	43
. Explain benefits to child/refer to goals/invite parents to observe program	10	22	-	-
. Miscellaneous negative comments (compulsory, no choice; board policy, etc.)	13	28	2	14
. No answer	11	24	-	-

Principals

Three responses to this question mentioned the advantages to primary students of one-to-one learning; three responses cited the advantages to junior students of the responsibility of planning and carrying out activities; three principals said that they would "explain the rationale behind the program" and the last two responses included: "the program builds success strategies" and "it's a strong language-based program".

The final series of questions relating to this second objective, involved examining the availability and quality of resources as well as professional development.

DID YOU ATTEND THE WORKSHOP IN JUNE TO FAMILIARIZE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS WITH THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

		Yes #	%	No #	%	No Answer #	%
Westview	Primary (N=44)	11	25	29	66	4	9
	Junior (N=46)	9	20	36	78	1	2
Optional	Primary (N=14)	6	43	8	57	-	-
	Junior (N=14)	7	50	7	50	-	-
Principals	Westview (N=8)	1	13	7	88	-	-
	Optional (N=4)	1	25	3	75	-	-

If Yes: How would you rate the effectiveness of this workshop?

		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Westview	Primary (N=11)	-	7	3	-	1
	Junior (N= 9)	1	1	4	1	2
Optional	Primary (N= 6)	-	5	1	-	-
	Junior (N= 7)	-	7	-	-	-
Westview	Principals (N= 1)	-	-	1	-	-
Optional	Principals (N= 1)	-	1	-	-	-

If No: Why did you not attend the workshop to familiarize teachers and principals with the Learning Partners Program?

		Not Invited Didn't Know	Already familiar with Program	Not on staff	Busy	N/A
Westview	Primary (N=44)	3	8	5	-	12
	Junior (N=46)	10	3	4	3	16
Optional	Primary (N=14)	-	1	2	-	5
	Junior (N=14)	2	1	-	-	4
Principals	Westview (N=8)	-	2	-	4	1
	Optional (N=4)	-	1	-	-	2

WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR IMPROVING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERED TO TEACHERS ABOUT LEARNING PARTNERS?

Primary Teachers	Westview (N = 44) #	Westview (N = 44) %	Optional (N = 14) #	Optional (N = 14) %
. More workshops/specific suggestions/have it in September/better speaker	4	9	3	21
. Have planning and sharing time	3	7	-	-
. Observing successful programs	3	7	-	-
. Miscellaneous (eliminate program; useless for unenthusiastic teachers; not aware of any P.D.)	8	18	-	-
. No answer	29	66	11	79

Junior Teachers	Westview (N = 46) #	%	Optional (N = 14) #	%
. Meetings in September to discuss planning, ideas, successes and failures and again half-way through the year	8	17	2	14
. Teachers must be convinced of the benefits of the program	3	7	1	7
. Visits to observe active successful situations	2	4	-	-
. Miscellaneous (don't feel program is worth it; first needs modification)	5	11	1	7
. No answer	31	67	10	71

Principals

Principals' suggestions for improving professional development were similar to those of the teachers. The responses included: having one professional development day per year as well as frequent in-school help (at lunchtime and after school); having this P.D. day early in September after staffing is settled; giving teachers the opportunity to see the program in progress in schools where it is working well; in-service for new teachers and if program is mandatory, P.D. input sessions should be common sessions; relating current guidelines to the goals and strategies of the Learning Partners Program.

The last three questions were directed at principals and concerned what principals do to facilitate the implementation of Learning Partners in their school; what additional materials and resources would help in the delivery of the program and what advice they would give to a colleague considering implementing Learning Partners. The questions and results are as follows:

WHAT DO YOU DO TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING PARTNERS IN YOUR SCHOOL?

	# Responses *
. Vocal input and support	9
. Visiting the program	5
. Material support	4
. Ensuring that school time-tables don't interrupt the Learning Partners Program	4
. Provide staff meeting time and P.D.	4
. Hall displays/photos of activities/ advertising in newsletter	2
. Allowing for a flexible approach	1
. Facilitate groupings physically by class locations	1

* Multiple responses

WHAT OTHER MATERIALS/RESOURCES IN ADDITION TO THOSE ALREADY PROVIDED WOULD HELP YOUR TEACHERS TO SUCCESSFULLY DELIVER THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

Five principals responded to this question by suggesting more and better supplies and/or increased funding; two responses requested "more time" and there was one response for each of the following suggestions: more thematic materials; more student written novels, stories; support materials on creative thinking aspects of the program.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A COLLEAGUE WHO IS CONSIDERING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM?

The twelve Westview Family and optional school principals gave the following suggestions:

- learn the content and rationale; look beyond the materials and gain understanding of the goals and strategies of the program
- be aware of the start-up costs in time and money
- think through the 'mechanics' before beginning
- prepare teachers - work closely with staff
- choose good and enthusiastic teaching partners
- implement slowly and evaluate regularly
- visit the program in a variety of schools to get the perspective of "old" and "new" programs
- make it optional for teachers

III TO EXAMINE THE EFFECT ON THE REST OF THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM

In accordance with the third and final objective, principals and teachers were asked questions relating to the transfer of content and strategies from the Learning Partners Program to other areas of the curriculum as well as the use of content and strategies from other areas in the Learning Partners Program.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOU ABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE CONTENT AND STRATEGIES OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM IN OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM?

Primary Teachers Westview (N = 44) Optional (N = 14)

	To a Great Extent		To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Content	9	29	25	14	55	57	11	-
Strategies	11	36	27	7	45	50	16	7

Primary teachers from the Westview Family and optional schools who did elaborate on their answers (27% and 46% respectively), commented that they do a follow-up to the Learning Partners Program in language arts classes by using activities such as flip books, games, puzzles and strategies such as small group learning and partnering; learning partners often do other things together; primary children play games and read stories introduced by juniors; learning partners is an extension of the classroom program and the program doesn't lend itself to transferring content and strategies in the primary curriculum.

Junior Teachers Westview (N = 46) Optional (N = 14)

	To a Great Extent		To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Content	22	7	20	43	50	50	9	-
Strategies	22	21	30	36	35	43	13	-

Junior teachers from Westview and optional schools who elaborated on their answers (48% and 50% respectively), mentioned the following ways of using content and strategies from Learning Partners in other curricula areas:

- in language arts activities, use of story telling, legends, games, sustained writing, art work in follow-up activities, fairy tales, flip boards and silly sentence cards, reading out loud and answering questions.

- organizational skills, time management and working through plans in all areas.

- several responses stated that the content and activities of Learning Partners were not relevant to the rest of the program.

It is evident from the primary and junior teacher responses that a significant number do not implement the content and strategies of the Learning Partners Program in other areas of curriculum.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOUR TEACHERS ABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE CONTENT AND STRATEGIES OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM IN OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

Principals

Of the eight Westview principals, more than half stated that their teachers were not able to implement either content or strategies from the Learning Partners Program to other areas of the curriculum. The four optional school principals stated that their teachers were able to use "Learning Partners" content and strategies to a moderate extent. In elaborating on this, principals comments were:

. little evidence of carry-over

. only in "arts" not in other areas of the curriculum

. a very few cases use partnering strategy

. teachers are generally unfamiliar with and resistent to the program and cannot identify the value of the strategies

. one optional school arranges trips and other activities using partnered classes.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU USE CONTENT AND STRATEGIES FROM OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS AS PART OF THE ACTIVITIES IN YOUR LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

	Westview (N = 44)		Optional (N = 14)					
	To a Great Extent		To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
Primary Teachers	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Content	16	14	11	14	56	57	16	14
Strategies	16	14	9	21	54	50	20	14

The teachers were asked to elaborate on the above question and despite a high percentage of "no answers" (Westview 80%; Optional 71%), the answers included the following:

- I follow suggested guidelines and Learning Partners is separate from my class program
- I modify it to suit the varying needs and abilities of the children
- Doesn't relate to primary level use
- I use environmental studies topics and holiday activities

Junior Teachers	Westview (N = 46)		Optional (N = 14)					
	To a Great Extent		To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %	W. %	O. %
Content	22	14	24	14	46	71	9	-
Strategies	26	7	30	36	31	43	13	14

Sixty-three percent of the Westview teachers and 50% of the optional school teachers didn't elaborate on their responses, but of the ones that did, the answers were as follows:

- I use other language arts activities including spelling, letters, booklets, arts and crafts, personal writing
- Content is strictly from supplied material
- Not much overlap due to lack of interest and motivation and time.

While teacher responses in the preceding tables indicate that content from other curriculum areas is not used to a great extent in Learning Partners' activities, there is some use of strategies from other curriculum areas, particularly by Junior teachers in both Westview and optionally involved schools.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE YOUR TEACHERS ABLE TO USE CONTENT AND STRATEGIES FROM OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS AS PART OF THE ACTIVITIES IN THE LEARNING PARTNERS PROGRAM

Principals Westview (N = 8) Optional (N = 4)

	To a Great Extent			To a Moderate Extent		Not at all		N/A	
	W.		O.	W.	O.	W.	O.	W.	O.
	%	#	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Content	38	-	-	25	50	25	25	12	25
Strategies	38	1	25	25	25	25	25	12	25

When asked to elaborate on their responses, principals added the following comments:

- Use of content and strategies only from "arts" - not other areas of the curriculum
- This is most appropriate in the consolidation phase
- Some teachers can more than others: difficult to generalize
- Some suggestions in Look! Hear! helpful in Learning Partners, i.e. planning boards, at-a-glance recordkeeping

Additional Comments

Principals and teachers were provided with space on the questionnaire for additional comments. Although there were relatively few responses, they are condensed and grouped as follows:

PRIMARY TEACHERS WESTVIEW (N = 9)

- tremendous program but not implemented properly
- impressed with program
- good program although repetitious. More commitment needed at junior level
- should be an integrated part of the language arts program
- support basic philosophy but should be voluntary
- shouldn't include all kids
- two times per week is enough. Older children resent amount of time spent in preparation
- needs new impetus and enthusiasm from administrators and consultants
- eliminate it

PRIMARY TEACHERS OPTIONAL (N = 5)

- it's great
- I've enjoyed it
- not for every child
- reduction in amount of time required

JUNIOR TEACHERS WESTVIEW (N = 8)

- program is not for all kids (some too young., can't cope with responsibility, behaviour problems, special education, etc.)
- children working together should arise out of a need and not a rigid timetable
- program has good points but needs revision
- should be optional

- resources and time spent not worthwhile
- program too rigid:needs a machine not a teacher
- requires more money for materials, etc.
- scheduling nightmare; outmoded idea that all kids are in same place at same time

JUNIOR TEACHERS OPTIONAL (N = 2)

- after working with the program for two terms, pupils have reached the saturation level; assignments are too difficult for them at this point (end of unit 5) and they have lost interest
- a modified program (in terms of time) would be super. It takes too much time as it is and creates some negative feelings among children

PRINCIPALS (N = 12)

- criticisms from staff re: lack of "ownership" of the Learning Partners program
- negative feelings of staff, in some cases, transmitted to kids
- would like to see a new start in Learning Partners Program with qualified people working with staff to show them the positive merits of the program
- philosophy is sound but there are more negatives as the program is implemented
- teachers find the work load heavy *
- would like recommendations from this study before the end of June to assist us with planning for next year *

* denotes responses from Optional school principals

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

I TO EXAMINE ASPECTS OF THE INTENDED IMPLEMENTED AND ATTAINED "LEARNING PARTNERS" CURRICULUM

- The Westview Family principals reported that not all of their teachers were involved in the Learning Partners Program while the principals of optional schools stated that 100% of their teachers were involved.

- Ninety-eight percent of the Westview primary teachers and 93% of the optional primary teachers reported that Learning Partners occurred once or twice a week while 52% of the Westview junior teachers used the Learning Partners Program 4 - 5 times per week as compared with 72% of the optional junior teachers.

- Most teachers in the primary and junior division of both Westview and optional schools reported that they allotted 30 minutes per Learning Partners session and they found the amount of time to be about right. The program was scheduled at the same time each day and in most cases Learning Partners took place in the junior or primary partner's classroom. Location did not pose a problem for teachers.

- The most common method for matching teachers for the Learning Partners Program was by grade, either assigned by the principal or on the basis of teacher requests. The matching was regarded as satisfactory by most teachers, although they did offer suggestions for improving the matching process. A significant majority of both primary and junior teachers rated their working relationship with their teaching partners as good to excellent.

- The matching of students was done on the basis of teacher discussion of each student. Although the matching process as well as the partnerships resulting from whatever process was used were described as satisfactory, improvements for the matching process were offered. At least half of all the teachers stated that they changed partnerships for reasons other than student mobility.

- Of seven items listed for rating, the instructional pages for teachers and the worksheets and binders for students were used to the greatest extent.

  A variety of Learning Partners support materials were listed and both primary and junior teachers indicated that the materials provided were useful. The degree of usefulness as indicated by the non-Westview family junior teachers was significantly greater than the degree indicated by the Westview junior teachers. Primary and junior teachers, both within and outside the Westview family, offered suggestions of supplementary resources and materials to improve the delivery of the program.

- Most teachers reported that they modified the Learning Partners Program to some extent - a view shared by principals. These modifications were made for a variety of reasons.

- Principals reported that Learning Partners Program implementation difficulties fell into three broad categories:

  a) teacher related;
  b) student related;
  c) allocation of time and availability of resources.

- When asked to rank the five identified goals of the Learning Partners Program, a high percentage of primary and junior teachers, together with the principals, believed that the Learning Partners Program significantly assisted children in acquiring important social skills such as sharing and helping others learn. However, all three groups lacked the conviction that the Learning Partners Program contributed significantly to the improvement of the students' communication skills.

- Teachers and principals were also asked about the essential philosophical elements of the Learning Partners Program and the most significant response was the encouragement of positive social relationships. A significant number of respondents also saw Learning Partners as stressing "process" rather than "product".

- Thirteen educational objectives (from P.P.J.D.) were listed and teachers and principals were asked to rate the extent to which the Learning Partners Program meets these objectives. The responses (particularly those of teachers) indicated that the Learning Partners Program did not contribute significantly to many of these objectives, however the ones relating to social and personal skill development and "process rather than "product" were more highly rated. Eleven of the twelve principals also agreed that the Learning Partners Program included activities with a genuine purpose and audience for writing.

- Teachers and principals were also asked to comment on the appropriateness of five identified goals of the L.P.P. Primary teachers' rankings of these goals ranged from 59% (50% optional) to 73% (79% optional) while junior teachers rankings ranged from a low of 46% (43% optional) to a high of 70% (71% optional). Again, the highest ranking in both cases was accorded the goal pertaining to the acquisition of social skills.

  Principals rated all goals for primary and junior students highly except for one "junior student" goal pertaining to the development of an awareness of the stages of learning.

II TO IDENTIFY ATTITUDES OF ADMINISTRATORS, STAFF AND STUDENTS

- The majority of teachers indicated that the Learning Partners Program had either no effect on their total Language Arts Program or contributed only to a moderate extent. When such a contribution was noted, both primary and junior teachers felt that the Learning Partners Program offered opportunities for enhancement of communication skills.

  When asked to describe the relationship of both programs, a significant number (one-third) of teachers failed to respond to the question.

  The large majority of principals, on the other hand, indicated that the Learning Partners Program contributed to the total Language Arts Program to a moderate extent, with the remainder of responses indicating that the contribution was to a great extent. Factors affecting the contribution included the commitment of the teachers and the amount of time teachers spent on the program.

- The observation time built into the Learning Partners Program was rated by teachers as from moderately to very valuable. Both primary and junior teachers indicated that observation time allowed them to gain a better understanding of individual student's strengths and weaknesses, but they noted that observation was an ongoing process in their classroom or that, because of a variety of reasons, it was not a practical component of their teaching. A significant number of teachers failed to elaborate on the importance of the observation time.

- Both primary and junior teachers agreed that the interaction between the two age groups was the component of the Learning Partners Program which they liked most. Primary teachers also highlighted the opportunity to work with other teachers as well as to observe their students, while the junior teachers failed to indicate any particular preference. The principals' responses focused on the interaction, the skills and strategies.

- Teachers identified time constraints and the compulsory nature of the program as the aspects of the Learning Partners Program which they liked least. Other aspects considered negative features of the program included inappropriateness for some students; unsuitable materials and activities; and the failure to allow for individualized learning.

  Principals indicated that organization time and unsupportive staff presented implementation difficulties, and were, thus, the aspects of the program they liked least.

- Both primary and junior teachers strongly suggested that modifications to the Learning Partners Program by the teachers using the program are necessary and include the following:

  1) that not all students be involved;
  2) that activities and materials be selected according to students' needs;
  3) that time and structuring be flexible, allowing for more or less time as required.

- Several principals suggested that the program be voluntary on the part of staff and that strategies for integrating the Learning Partners Program into the regular program be developed. In agreement with the teachers, the principals also suggested modifying the amount of time spent per week/year and restructuring the program so- that activities are designed to accommodate/integrate with regular programming.

- Fifty percent (50%) of the Westview teachers said that they would choose to implement the Learning Partners Program were it optional; while seventy-one percent (71%) of the teachers in the schools whose involvement in the program is optional said they would choose to implement it. In sharp contrast, one hundred percent (100%) of the principals, given the choice, would opt to implement the Learning Partners Program in their schools.

- Both primary and junior teachers, as well as their principals, felt that the Learning Partners Program contributed to a great extent to their students' and their own familiarity with a large number of students in their schools. However, the impact of the program on enhancing staff morale was rated by the Westview teachers as not enhancing it at all, while the teachers in the optionally-involved schools rated the impact on morale as moderate. The principals' interpretation of the impact on staff morale ranged from not enhancing it at all to moderate.

- The most common way of communicating with parents about the Learning Partners Program was through the oral and written reporting procedures which are a regular part of the total school program.

- Both primary and junior teachers, as well as principals, cited the social and communication benefits to their students as the explanation to parents for offering the Learning Partners Program. The other common explanation, offered by the teachers, would be the mandatory nature of the program; while the principals would explain the rationale of the program to the parents.

  Although, for a variety of reasons, a high percentage of teachers and principals failed to attend the June workshop to familiarize staffs with the Learning Partners Program, a number of suggestions were nevertheless offered for improving the professional development offered. These included a formal professional development session in September followed by informal in-school sessions throughout the year. It should be noted that a high percentage of teachers offered no suggestions for improvement of the professional development; while a number of teachers used this question as an opportunity to comment on modifying or eliminating the program rather than on improving the professional development associated with it.

- Principals reported that they facilitate the implementation of the Learning Partners Program in their schools by:

  1) their active and visible support,
  2) providing the time needed for professional development and collaborative team planning,
  3) ensuring that appropriate funds and materials are available and
  4) by making the necessary timetable adjustments.

- Principals' advice to colleagues considering the implementation of the Learning Partners Program in their schools included the following: making the program optional; choosing the appropriate teacher-partners; being aware of the program's requirements; and planning the necessary professional development.

III TO EXAMINE THE EFFECT ON THE REST OF THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM

- Teachers and principals were asked to comment on the extent to which content and strategies are transferred from the Learning Partners Program to other areas of the curriculum as well as the use of content and strategies from other areas in the Learning Partners Program. A significant number of teachers reported that they weren't able to implement the content and strategies of the Learning Partners Program in other areas of the curriculum. More than half of the Westview principals shared this view while the four optional school principals stated that their teachers were able to accomplish this to a moderate extent.

- Similar results were reported for the transfer of content and strategies from other areas of the curriculum to the Learning Partners Program. A significant number of teachers stated that they didn't use other curricular content or strategies to a great extent in the Learning Partners Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT:

1.a) the Learning Partners Program be mandatory for all schools, teachers and students in the elementary panel of the Westview Family of Schools;

b) the above policy be clearly communicated in writing by the Assistant Superintendent of the Westview Family of Schools to all principals and teachers;

c) in some circumstances exceptions to the above may be negotiated as follows:

- school involvement - between Assistant Superintendent and principal
- extent of staff involvement (e.g. partial program) - between principal and individual teacher
- student involvement - between principals, teachers and generalist program leaders
- use of all materials - between teachers, generalist program leaders and conveners (where appropriate)

2.a) ongoing and in-house professional development become an integral part of the Learning Partners Program and include the following:

- clarification of goals
- a focus on the language aspects of the program
- strategies for integrating the Learning Partners Program
- correlation to "Active Learning"
- modification and/or creation of materials
- strategies for successful teacher partnering

b) principals actively request the involvement of the generalist program leaders in the Learning Partners Program;

c) Westview generalist program leaders have, as part of their performance objectives and appraisal, the responsibility for assisting with the implementation of the Learning Partners Program. Their responsibilities, as part of their involvement in the schools, should include the following:

- working with teachers in the review, modification and creation of materials
- working with teachers needing clarification about the delivery of all aspects of the program
- assisting teachers in determining the suitability of the program for certain students
- ongoing professional development activities with staffs

3. individual teaching partners be responsible for timetabling the Learning Partners Program;

4. the Learning Partners Program be included in the reporting system as a component of Language Arts, both primary and junior;

5. Westview principals include the Learning Partners Program as part of their annual review;

6. a realistic cost per student be established and budgetted for. An actual cost per student be charged to the optional schools;

7. a copy of the complete report be sent to each participating school; the summary of the review and the recommendations be shared with all participating teachers.

APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF LEARNING PARTNERS - PRIMARY STUDENTS*

The majority of the selected sample of primary students were from grade three.

Grade	Westview (N = 35) #	%	Optional (N = 16) #	%
1	7	20	4	25
2	13	37	5	31
3	15	43	7	44

* Percentages in some cases equal more than one hundred percent due to multiple responses.

Do you like your Learning Partner?

Response	Westview (N = 35) #	%	Optional (N = 16) #	%
Yes	31	89	14	88
No	1	3	2	12
Kind of/A bit	3	9	-	-

Yes - I like my Learning Partner?

	Westview (N=31) #	%	Optional (N=14) #	%
- My Learning Partner is nice to me; is kind; is the best; doesn't talk to me	15	48	7	50
- Teaches me things; helps me	7	23	3	21
- Draws well; makes pictures; we make nice things	6	19	4	29

- We play games together.	4	13	3	21
- My Learning Partner is funny; we have fun together	3	10	5	36
- My Learning Partner reads stories to me	3	10	-	-
- Other - He's my friend; prints well; we go to the library together; lets me do some of the work myself; She was my Learning Partner last time	5	16	-	-

Do you talk about Learning Partners outside of school?

Response	Westview (N=35) #	%	Optional (N=14) #	%
Yes	15	43	13	81
No	20	57	3	19

Where? With Whom?	Westview (N=15) #	%	Optional (N=13) #	%
Family: mom; dad; sister; grandparents; at home with family; relatives	8	53	10	77
Friends: friends at home; telephone; friends at school	8	53	3	23
Other: weekends; to myself	1	7	1	8

If you moved to a new school would you want Learning Partners there?

Response	Westview (N=35) #	%	Optional (N=16) #	%
Yes	32	91	16	100
No	3	9	0	-

Yes - If I moved to a new school, I would want Learning Partners there

	Westview (N=32)		Optional (N=16)	
	#	%	#	%
- It's fun; I like it; It's the best thing	18	56	10	63
- Play games; so we can plan games	2	6	3	19
- Only with a good Learning Partner; I would have a nicer Learning Partner; I'd get a new Learning Partner	2	6	3	19
- To learn more; they teach us things	2	6	2	13
- Have stories; read books	2	6	1	6
- My Learning Partner is nice to me	2	6	-	-
- Other - I'd get to know people; drawing; I want to see my Learning Partner again; we make things	3	9	2	13
- No answer	5	16	-	-

No - If I moved to a new school, I would not want Learning Partners there

Response	Westview (N=3) #
I don't like it	1
My partner is bossy	1
No answer	1

How many years have you done Learning Partners?

Years	Westview (N=35)		Optional (N=16)	
	#	%	#	%
One	12	34	8	50
Two	12	34	6	38
Three	11	31	2	12

Tell me what you like doing best at school?

	Westview (N=35) #	Westview (N=35) %	Optional (N=16) #	Optional (N=16) %
- Reading; writing; spelling; printing; library	13	37	1	6
- Math	11	31	6	38
- Art; drawing; colouring; making things	6	17	3	19
- Playing; playing with toys; playing with blocks; outside	5	14	4	25
- Learning Partners	-	-	1	6
- Other - recess; activities; gym; trips; music; making books	5	14	1	6

Here are some other things you do in school, tell me which one you like best.

Learning Partners and Art were rated the highest from both groups, with Learning Partners being the most highly favoured.

Activities	Westview (N=35) #	Westview (N=35) %	Optional (N=16) #	Optional (N=16) %
Learning Partners	20	57	7	44
Art	11	31	5	31
Gym	2	6	1	6
Spelling	1	3	-	-
Math	1	3	3	19

Do you ever play with your Learning Partner outside of Learning Partner time?

	Westview (N=35) #	Westview (N=35) %	Optional (N=16) #	Optional (N=16) %
Yes	13	37	7	44
No	22	63	9	56

Yes - I do play with my Learning Partner outside of Learning Partner time.

	Westview (N=13)		Optional (N=7)	
	#	%	#	%
- During recess	9	69	6	86
- We play together; play outside; during school; play after school; at the park; we play at home	3	23	6	86
- We talk about Learning Partners outside	1	8	-	-
- When I can find her	1	8	-	-
- We share snacks	-	-	1	14

No - I do not play with my Learning Partner Outside of Learning Partner time.

	Westview (N=22)		Optional (N=9)	
	#	%	#	%
- My Learning Partner plays with his own friends; I play with my own friends; we both play with our own friends	13	59	4	44
- I don't see my Learning Partner; I can't find her; we both have different recesses	7	32	3	33
- Other - My Learning Partner doesn't want to play with me; my Learning Partner is mean; my Learning Partner is of the opposite sex.	1	5	2	22
- No answer	1	5	-	-

How did you get your Learning Partner?

	Westview (N=35)		Optional (N=16)	
	#	%	#	%
- The teacher picked my partner	29	83	16	100
- We picked each other	2	6	-	-
- My Learning Partner picked me	2	6	-	-
- I picked my Partner	1	3	-	-
- My friend picked my Partner	1	3	-	-

What do you like best about Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=35) #	Westview (N=35) %	Optional (N=16) #	Optional (N=16) %
- Art; drawing; When we make pictures; making things; making puppets	19	54	8	50
- Stories; When they read to me; when I get to read to my Partner; they teach me reading	8	23	4	25
- My Learning Partner is nice; my Learning Partner likes me; he buys me presents	2	6	3	19
- Writing	2	6	-	-
- Flip cards	2	6	-	-
- Playing games	1	3	7	44
- Learning about new things	-	-	2	13
- Other - It's fun; silly sentence cards; doing work; nothing; going on trips	5	14	2	13

Is there something you don't like about Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=35) #	Westview (N=35) %	Optional (N=16) #	Optional (N=16) %
- Nothing	15	43	4	25
- Boring; just sitting around doing nothing	4	11	-	-
- Reading; Storybooks; when my Learning Partner reads me the same story; when he reads to me	3	9	5	31
- When my Learning Partner treats me bad; I don't like my Learning Partner; I don't like one of my Learning Partners	3	9	3	19
- Getting organized; setting up things; when we have to tidy up; when we first come down its noisy	2	6	1	6
- Playing games; tough games; when you have to find a word that you can't find from a bunch of letters	2	6	1	6

- Flip cards	2	6	-	-
- When they cancel it	2	6	-	-
- Other - Writing, when my Learning Partner takes home the puppets; when my Learning Partner talks to his friends	8	23	3	19

Here are some things you do in Learning Partners, which one do you like the most.

	Westview (N=35)		Optional (N=16)	
	#	%	#	%
Games	21	60	7	44
Puppets	6	17	4	25
Flip Cards	5	14	1	6
Story Books	3	9	4	25

Of those who chose games as being their favourite activity associated with Learning Partners, the majority favoured the games because they were fun.

Among the primary students who chose puppets as being the best activity, they chose this activity primarily because they enjoyed putting on puppet shows and being able to play act with them.

For those who chose Flip Cards as being their favourite, most of the students thought Flip Cards were fun and they enjoyed changing (flipping) the cards around.

The students who like the Story Books the best, stated this as being their favourite activity because they enjoyed reading.

Review of Learning Partners - Junior Students*

What Grade are you in?

Grade	Westview (N=150) #	%	Optional (N=66) #	%
Four	46	31	24	36
Five	52	35	24	36
Six	52	35	18	27

* Percentages in some cases equal more than one hundred percent due to multiple responses

How many years have you had Learning Partners?

Year(s)	Westview (N=150) #	%	Optional (N=66) #	%
One	31	21	12	18
Two	20	13	37	56
Three	51	34	9	14
Four	43	29	6	9
Five	3	2	-	-
No answer	2	1	2	2

How many times a week do you do Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=150) #	%	Optional (N=66) #	%
Once	40	27	2	3
Twice	96	64	64	97
Three times	11	7	-	-
Five times	2	1	-	-
No answer	1	1	-	-

Where do you do Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
In a classroom; in our class; in my Learning Partner's class	117	78	54	82
Library	29	19	5	8
Hallway	11	7	6	9
Lunchroom	-	-	3	5
Other - gym; near the office; in the school; lower south	4	3	-	-
No answer	6	4	-	-

Do you talk about Learning Partners outside of school?

	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
Yes	73	49	43	65
No	77	51	23	35

To whom?

	Westview (N=73) #	Westview (N=73) %	Optional (N=43) #	Optional (N=43) %
Friends	40	55	22	51
Family (Immediate)	33	45	29	67
To my Learning Partner	6	8	1	2
Teacher	2	3	-	-
Other - next door, neighbour, cousin	2	3	-	-
No answer	2	3	-	-

If you moved to a new school, would you want Learning Partners there?

	Westview (N=150) #	%	Optional (N=66) #	%
Yes	81	54	28	42
No	66	44	38	58
Maybe/uncertain	3	2	-	-

Yes - If I moved to a new school I would want Learning Partners there.

	Westview (N=81) #	%	Optional (N=28) #	%
- It's fun; exciting; It's great; I like Learning Partners	49	60	14	50
- I enjoy working with little kids; I want to learn about younger kids; I like helping kids; I like reading to a younger kid.	18	22	5	18
- I like teaching; so I can teach them what I know and they can teach me what they know; you're like a teacher; you learn more; it's a learning experience	17	21	3	11
- You get to know people; able to meet more people	4	5	4	14
- I enjoy bossing my Learning Partner	2	2	-	-
- Able to get away from other classes	2	2	-	-
- Other - I like my Learning Partner; I enjoy the planning; I like to work with someone; you get to do art with them; I am helping them.	2	2	4	14

No - If I moved to a new school I would not want Learning Partners there.

	Westview (N=66) #	Westview (N=66) %	Optional (N=38) #	Optional (N=38) %
- I don't like it; boring	29	44	21	55
- My Learning Partner misbehaves; rude; bad; noisy; I don't like my Learning Partner; my Learning Partner doesn't listen; doesn't pay attention	12	18	7	18
- I'm not patient with younger kids; I don't like little kids, difficult to work with little kids; may not like the little kids; because I wouldn't know the kids; kids should be taught by teachers, not older kids	9	14	6	16
- Too much paper work; too much work involved; too much trouble; it's a waste of time; takes up too much time	6	9	5	13
- I don't know anyone; wouldn't know anyone	2	3	-	-
- Other - I don't like teaching; I only like it once in a while; I don't want to go through it again; because I like my Learning Partner here; I don't like reading stories; I want to learn about other things, it gets in the way of other work	6	9	2	5
- No answer	5	8	-	-

Circle the three activities you like best in school.

Activities	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
Gym	104	69	46	70
Math	82	55	20	30
Art	78	52	48	73
Music	48	32	20	30
French	30	20	15	23
Spelling	29	19	12	18
Reading	27	18	14	21
Learning Partners	25	17	13	20
Writing	12	8	6	9
Environmental Studies	10	7	4	6

(Note: Some students chose less than three activities.)

These are materials you use in Learning Partners. Circle the three you like the best.

Materials	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
Games	137	91	61	92
Silly Sentence Cards	108	72	38	50
Flip books	62	41	28	42
Story books	60	40	36	55
Wordless books	35	23	15	23
Picture sets	29	19	7	11
Pattern books	16	11	10	15

Do you play with or talk to your Learning Partner outside of Learning Partner time?

	Westview (N=150)		Optional (N=66)	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	67	45	41	62
No	83	55	25	38

Yes - I do play with or talk to my Learning Partner outside of Learning Partner time.

	Westview (N=67)		Optional (N=41)	
	#	%	#	%
- Play/talk at recess	19	28	14	34
- Play/talk at the playground/outside	12	18	7	17
- Out of school; at home; after school; on the way to school; before school; going home from school; we live in the same neighbourhood/ building	9	13	5	12
- Just to say "Hello" - small talk	6	9	9	22
- We talk about Learning Partners	6	9	2	5
- We just play together	6	9	2	5
- We play/talk during lunchtime	5	7	5	12
- We talk about various things to each other; she talks to me	5	7	1	2
- He's in my class	2	3	-	-
- Sometimes	2	3	-	-
- I like her; he's fun	1	1	2	5
- I protect him from other kids; when he gets beaten up, he talks to me; because kids beat him up and then I beat up them	1	1	2	5
- Other - In the halls; I boss them around; we see each other all the time; I give her food/ drink; we do silly jokes together; she sneaks up and scares me; when I'm bored and have nothing to do	3	4	5	12

No - I do not play with or talk to my Learning Partner outside of Learning Partner time?

	Westview (N=83) #	Westview (N=83) %	Optional (N=25) #	Optional (N=25) %
- We play with our own friends; he/she plays with his/her own friends; I play with my own friends; he plays with girls; I don't play with younger kids	32	39	8	32
- I don't like/or get along with my Learning Partner; my Learning Partner doesn't like to play or talk to me; my Learning Partner calls me names; she/he acts too big for his/her age.	14	17	8	32
- We don't see each other; we have different recesses	14	17	4	16
- He's too busy; I'm too busy; I'm busy with steel drums (band)	7	8	-	-
- He doesn't listen/or pay attention	3	4	-	-
- I don't want to	3	4	-	-
- Other - He doesn't live near me; we ignore each other; we would get in trouble by the teacher	7	8	1	4
- No answer	8	10	4	16

How did you get your Learning Partner?

	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
The teacher picked my Learning Partner	115	77	66	100
I (we) chose them	25	17	-	-
Teacher and I chose	2	1	-	-
Other	4	3	-	-
Don't know	1	1	-	-
Not applicable	3	2	-	-

Do you like your Learning Partner?

	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
Yes	96	64	39	59
No	44	29	18	27
Sometimes	6	4	14	21
I like one and don't like the other	3	2	-	-
No answer	1	1	-	-

(Note: Some students have more than one Learning Partner.)

Yes - I do like my Learning Partner.

	Westview (N=96) #	Westview (N=96) %	Optional (N=39) #	Optional (N=39) %
- My Learning Partner is nice; friendly; fun; playful; cheerful; enthusiastic; happy; she laughs; good personality	66	69	23	59
- My Learning Partner listens to me; quiet; pays attention	11	11	6	15
- My Learning Partner behaves; not silly; helpful; polite; cool; doesn't cheat; doesn't fool around; easy to work with	10	10	8	21
- My Learning Partner is smart; good student	8	8	4	10
- My Learning Partner is cute; pretty	3	3	3	8
- She/he likes me; I like my Partner; we like each other; we're friends	2	2	7	18
- She's a girl	2	2	-	-
- Shares, gives us stuff	2	2	-	-
- Likes to read/Enjoys working	2	2	-	-
- We both like the same things	2	2	-	-
- Other - talks to me; good teacher; good drawer; good printer; I like playing with him; "She does good"; I like reading books to her	4	4	3	8

No - I do not like my Learning Partner?

	Westview (N=44) #	Westview (N=44) %	Optional (N=18) #	Optional (N=18) %
- Disobeys; fools around; rude; misbehaves; talks to others; doesn't listen; doesn't pay attention; too active; wants to break the paper dice	27	61	8	44
- I don't like my Learning Partner; my Learning Partner doesn't like me; We don't get along; my Learning Partner is a pest; silly	7	16	4	22
- Doesn't work; lazy; gives up too easily	5	11	2	11
- Talks too much; asks too many questions	5	11	-	-
- Boring	-	-	2	11
- My Learning Partner is bossy	-	-	2	11
- Other - He's sad; she wants to do everything; and I don't; he plays with girls; my Learning Partner bothers me about how much she hates Learning Partners	3	7	4	22
- No answer	1	2	-	-

What do you like about Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=150) #	Westview (N=150) %	Optional (N=66) #	Optional (N=66) %
- Games	43	29	22	33
- Teaching younger kids; helping them; working with younger kids; getting to know my Learning Partner; seeing my Learning Partner	38	25	10	15
- Nothing	27	18	8	12
- Reading; storybooks; reading to my Learning Partner	20	13	13	20
- Fun; exciting	17	11	4	6
- Art; drawing; creative; making things	16	11	7	11
- Playing	6	4	-	-

- Takes away work time; missing regular school	4	3	4	6
- My Partner listens; co-operates; behaves	4	3	-	-
- Activities	3	2	6	9
- Learning experience	2	1	-	-
- Everything	2	1	1	2
- Preparing/Planning	1	1	2	3
- Sharing	-	-	2	3
- Other - Writing; Learning Partner appreciates it; it's easy; word cards; it's a good program; my Learning Partner likes me	6	4	5	8
- Don't know	1	1	-	-
- No answer	1	1	3	5

What don't you like about Learning Partners?

	Westview (N=150)		Optional (N=66)	
	#	%	#	%
- My Learning Partner doesn't listen; misbehaves; doesn't co-operate; cheats; rude; talks too much; fools around; doesn't try; I don't like to scream at him	32	21	7	11
- Nothing	25	17	11	17
- Reading; reading to my Learning Partner; too much reading; the stories; Story books; word books	19	13	9	14
- Boring when we run out of things to do	16	11	2	3
- My Learning Partner; my Learning Partner doesn't like me; when we argue with each other	15	10	8	12
- Preparing; planning	7	5	10	15
- Everything	7	5	1	2
- Writing in our binders; writing; binders	7	5	2	3
- Games; some games	6	4	3	5

- Interrupts the regular school work	5	3	4	6
- It's hard work	3	2	-	-
- Teaching	3	2	3	5
- Not enough time; not able to finish in time; takes up too much time	3	2	4	6
- Art; drawing	2	1	1	2
- Activities	1	1	2	3
- Other - Singing; playing with my Learning Partner; when my Learning Partner is late; when the entire class comes to our class; everyone does the same thing; picture books; being with little kids; when my Partner asks me strange questions; doing something all the time; Learning Partners is too fast; they don't appreciate it; clip books; when we have to pack up	13	9	6	9
- No answer	7	5	3	5
- Not valid	3	2	-	-

Summary - Primary Division Students

Most, if not all, of the partners were chosen for the students by their teachers. Practically everyone, from both the Westview and Optional groups, liked their learning partners. The main reason stated for liking them was that they were nice and/or kind people.

The majority from the two areas of schools indicated that they did not play with their learning partner outside of learning partner time. This was primarily due to the fact that each member of the partnership preferred to play with their own friends.

Program

The sample of primary students from both the Westview and Optional schools to a great extent, chose Learning Partners as being their favourite subject. (Westview - 57%, Optional - 44%). The two groups overwhelmingly favoured having the program available to them if they moved to a new school. Generally, the students like Learning Partners and had fun participating in it.

The majority of the primary students, originating from the Westview sample, did not discuss the program outside of school. The opposite was true with the optional sample, as the results indicated that approximately eighty percent did talk about it outside of school. Of those from the total sample, who spoke about Learning Partners, the information was most often relayed to family and friends.

Art (drawing, making things) was selected as the favourite aspect of the Program, and was chosen by both families of schools. Most of the children agreed that the games were the preferred activities associated with the Program

Finally, when asked to state what they did not like about Learning Partners, the majority of the Westview students indicated nothing was wrong with the Program. Most of those from the Optional schools indicated that Reading (Storybooks) was the most unpopular aspect associated with Learning Partners. This was followed by the second highest rated response, which stated that "Nothing" was wrong with the Program.

Summary - Junior Division Students

Partners

In nearly all cases, in both the Westview and Optional schools, teachers assigned learning partners to the students. The majority from both groups, indicated that they liked their learning partners (Westview - 64%, Optional - 59%) mainly because they were nice, friendly or happy people and were enthusiastic and fun to work with. For those who did not like their learning partners (Westview 29%, Optional - 27%), the reason was primarily due to the fact that the younger children often misbehaved.

When asked whether the students played with or spoke to their learning partners outside of learning partner time, the Optional school students responded more positively than did those from the Westview area. The majority from the Optional sample said they did play with or talk to the younger children outside of learning partner time, while slightly over half of the Westview students indicated that they did not. For those who did play with or speak to their partners, they generally did so during recess. The main reason cited by both groups for not associating with their partners outside of learning partner time, was that each member of the partnership played with their own friends. In addition, the Optional school students also mentioned that the partners often did not get along with one another and therefore did not play together.

Program

Slightly over half of the Westview sample indicated that they would want the Learning Partners Program available to them if they attended another school. Whereas, the majority of the Optional school students stated they would not want to have this program available to them if they changed schools. Those children from the total sample who preferred to retain this Program as part of their new school's curriculum, felt that Learning Partners was fun and/or exciting. In contrast, those who did not want Learning Partners offered to them, found the Program boring and didn't like it.

Slightly over half of the Westview sample did not discuss the Program outside of Learning Partner time. In contrast, however, most of the Junior Students attending the Optional schools, did talk about Learning Partners outside of school. Of the total sample who spoke about the Program outside of school, the information was primarily given to family and friends.

Gym, Math and Art were chosen by both groups as representing the three best liked activities/subjects. Learning Partners was not ranked too favourably by either the Westview or Optional group in the Junior Division, differing from the Primary children who favoured this Program above all others.

The best liked materials used in the Program were Games and Silly Sentence Cards, with the games overwhelmingly representing the favourite activities associated with Learning Partners.

Finally, when asked to state what they did not like about the Program, most of those from the Westview group indicated frustration with their partners and the program as the result of their younger colleagues mischievous behaviour.
The second most common response made, by children in the Westview family, was that "Nothing" was wrong with Learning Partners. This statement of "Nothing" being wrong with the Program and therefore liking everything about it, represented the overall, general response of children in the Optional family of schools.

Appendix B

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The review was conducted in 8 Westview elementary schools and 4 optional schools. Each committee member visited at least one school to observe a junior classroom input session and the subsequent partnering session. The following is a summary of those observations in 9 schools.

The principal selected the class to be visited. Observed implementation varied from strict adherence to the L.P.P. to a total substitution of the specific content while maintaining the philosophical framework (i.e. partnering).

Teachers were observed in the following roles:

Introductions

These included explanations of tasks, verbal directions, overviews of plans, and providing lesson frameworks.

Lessons

Teachers were observed in a variety of roles. Some were quite directive while others provided little direct teaching. Lessons included providing a sample lesson, modelling the task, discussing choices, verbal support, answering questions and observing students at work. Teachers were also observed preparing materials, assisting students and keeping students on task. On one occasion the students and teacher read together (choral reading).

Conclusions

The Learning Partners' sessions concluded with group reviews or a question and answer period. Teachers were also seen adjusting partnerships (due to absence) and supervising and pacing the group activities by providing timing signals (e.g. chimes, lights, et al). Teachers observed students at work and communicated with their teaching partners. During the partnering sessions a minimum of teacher talk was evident.

Student Behaviour

Student behaviour varied tremendously during the input and partnering sessions from very task oriented to non-task related behaviour. They asked questions, requested assistance and made games during the planning sessions. Laughter, eye contact, touching and listening were some of the behaviours evidenced during Learning Partners. Students worked side-by-side in a common workspace sharing materials and tasks. One junior student was seen guiding a partner's hand while sewing a felt puppet. However, other students were side-tracked on non-task related behaviours.

Time on Task

Observed student behaviour varied from minimal participation to complete involvement with the task. This was true for both the input and partnering sessions. Children worked at greatly varying rates, some had difficulty reading the material and spent the entire 30 minutes on this task, while others appeared to finish early. On several occasions the students were told that they could complete the task on another occasion. Some students were observed modifying or omitting portions of the activities while others completed all activities in the prescribed time allotment. All observed sessions continued for the prescribed 30 minute period.

Location

All observed input sessions took place in the junior division classroom. Most observed partnering sessions took place either in the junior or primary classroom, some occurred in the library and some in both classrooms.

Administration

One principal spent 10 minutes in a partnering session. There was no other evidence of direct input.